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Trends. Wanted: Russian Nuclear Security and a Primer on Russian Psychology

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Should United States Government (USG) tax payer's dollars-if any-be expended towards nuclear security in Russia? Yes, the argument may go, if there's a linkage between dollars and nuclear security. However, supporters of a linkage may argue that the linkage may be a positive or negative one. To the former, the more money is spent on safely and fully employing Russian nuclear weapons scientists and on dismantling and destroying nuclear weapons assets, the more security one has obtained. To the latter, the less money is spent on anything Russian, the more the Russian government and nuclear weapons personnel will act responsibly-i.e., safely-in the hope of receiving more money.

Can both positions be correct? The answer might be yes. A positive linkage suggests that the psychology of positive reinforcement is operative. A negative linkage suggests the operation of the psychology of omission training. In each case money serves as a primary reinforcer. However, in the human cognitive world, money also serves as a discriminative stimulus-a harbinger of more money or a forewarning of less. Moreover, even as a reinforcer, money has sensitizing, desensitizing, habituation, and perseverative properties. All together, these psychological complexities render it understandable that a primer on Russian psychology related to nuclear security Issues has not yet been written. (See Carruthers, B.G., & Espeland, W.N. (1998). Money, meaning, and morality. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 41, 1384-1408; Haynes, J., & Wiener, J. (1996). The analyst in the counting house: Money as symbol and reality in analysis. *British Journal of Psychotherapy*, 13, 14-25; Lau, S. (1998). Money: What it means to children and adults. *Social Behavior and Personality*, 26, 297-306; Schmitt, E. (November 6, 1999). House approves aid bill but some call it inadequate. *The New York Times*, <http://www.nytimes.com>; Soman, D. (1998). The illusion of delayed incentives: Evaluating future effort-money transactions. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 35, 427-437.) (Keywords: Nuclear Weapons, Positive Reinforcement, Russia, Security.)